



"It is my great pleasure to endorse the work of the Somerville Human Rights Commission.

A major part of its mission is to enforce the municipal, state, and federal laws that protect every citizen's right to be free of discrimination. It does so through community education and by investigating individual complaints of discrimination.

The Commission promotes mutual respect and understanding among all individuals and groups in the city through improving the quality of public discourse.

Somerville will not tolerate hate of any kind. Please take advantage of the Commission's presence and ask for help if you or someone you know experiences discrimination."

**Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone,
City of Somerville**

What are my rights?

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of:

- age
- race or color
- sex
- disability
- maternity leave
- ancestry
- sexual orientation
- criminal record
- religious creed
- national origin
- sexual harassment

The Somerville Human Rights Ordinance also protects against discrimination on the basis of:

- citizenship
- economic status
- ethnicity
- family or marital status
- source of income
- military status

City of Somerville

Human Rights Commission



City Hall Annex
50 Evergreen Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143
Tel.: (617) 625-6600 x2406

humanrights@somervillema.gov

[www.somervillema.gov/departments/
health/somerville-commissions/hrc](http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/health/somerville-commissions/hrc)

What is the Somerville Human Rights Commission?

The Somerville Human Rights Commission is an agency of the City of Somerville. It was created in 1993 with the passage of the city's Human Rights Ordinance.

The membership of the Somerville Human Rights Commission consists of up to twelve city residents.

Members are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Board of Aldermen. The Commission is staffed by the Director of the Office of Somerville Commissions and supported by many volunteers.

What does the Commission do?

Our mission has two main parts:

- Investigate and resolve complaints of civil rights violations in the city;
- Work with individuals and groups in the community - including city agencies - to increase awareness of civil rights and promote tolerance for diversity.



Other Commission Activities

We sponsor many events and ongoing programs throughout the year, including:

- Immigrant-Police relations monthly meetings
- Know-your-rights workshops
- Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration

What should I do if I feel that my civil rights have been violated?

Call us! If you have suffered a civil rights **violation** in Somerville, you can file a complaint with us. We can also refer you to other appropriate agencies and help you navigate the process as you pursue justice.

Why does Somerville have a Human Rights Commission?

Every community should have a Human Rights Commission! Especially in a diverse, densely populated city like Somerville, a Human Rights Commission provides people with a local resource de-



voted to protecting the rights of its people. Our civil, human, and constitutional rights are only ideals unless we have meaningful enforcement mechanisms at all levels of government.



How can I get involved with the Commission?

Our regular monthly meetings are open to the public and usually take place on the second **Monday of each month at 6:30 pm** in the Tufts Administration Building, Basement level (room #103) 167 Holland St. For the agenda and confirm meeting details: www.somervilleema.gov/pubmtgs.cfm

Recruiting: Positions Open Now

We strive to have our membership reflect the diversity of our city and welcome your input. Call our Executive Director to inquire about commissioner positions and other volunteer opportunities.